

Public Affairs Qualification Course Advanced Distributed Learning – Resident

Advance Information

The following information is provided for students who will be attending the resident portion of the PAQC-ADL course.

Directions to Fort Meade

Flying: If you arrive by commercial air, we recommend you fly into Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) Airport. Fort Meade is about 10 miles south of the airport. Military transportation is not available. Taxi service is available from the airport to Fort Meade at an estimated cost of \$20 for one person. Ask for a receipt, since this expense is reimbursable when you file your travel voucher. A rental car may be beneficial if it is authorized on your orders. You can register your vehicle at the post's visitor center for the period you will be here.

Washington Reagan National and Dulles International, the other two major airports in the area, are a considerable distance from Fort Meade. Taxi fare from National is approximately \$65, while a taxi from Dulles can run as high as \$150. Using the Metro (the D.C. subway system) to the closest stops might reduce those costs, but the stops are several miles from the post.

Driving: Fort Meade is northeast of Washington, D.C. and southwest of Baltimore off the Baltimore-Washington Parkway (Route 295). From the B/W Parkway, take the MD-175 exit toward Fort Meade and Odenton. After turning onto 175, the fort is about two miles down the road. Look for the Reece Road entrance to the fort on your right.

Automobiles with a valid military registration decal will not need to be registered on post. **Automobiles without a valid military registration decal** must be registered for Fort Meade at the visitor's center, located at the Reece Road gate. The Visitor Control Center is open Monday through Friday from 0730 to 1530. (Please check <http://www.ftmeade.army.mil/vcc.html> before you depart for any last minute changes in the Visitor Control Center hours of operation).

If you arrive after hours or on the weekend, the gate guards can issue a one-day pass until you can get your car registered on post. Once your vehicle is registered, you may enter and leave through any gate.

Vehicle registration

You will need your vehicle registration, proof of insurance, a valid driver's license, a military or government ID and a copy of your orders. You will be issued a pass for the dates on your orders.

NOTE: If your name does not appear on the car's registration, you will need a power of attorney from the person to whom the car is registered.

Warning: Obey all posted speed limits on post. The military police strictly enforce all traffic regulations. Speeding fines begin at \$70 and go up from there, so please drive carefully on and off post.

Health Care

Kimbrough Ambulatory Care Center on post is not a full-service hospital. It may not be able to provide the health care you require. However, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Bethesda Naval Medical Center and the hospital at Andrews Air Force Base are within driving distance. If you have specific health care issues, it would be best to call Kimbrough Ambulatory Care Center at 301-677-8982 before you get here.

For Defense Department civilians who are enrolled in a health benefits plan, most plans are accepted in this area. Ensure you bring an adequate supply of any prescription medications. Room 1191 has been set aside within the DINFOS building for military sick call. The hours of operation are 0600-0630 Monday through Friday.

Reporting and billeting

Billeting normally will not be available prior to the day before class starts. If you expect to arrive early, contact the Billeting Office on post at (410) 674-7700.

Billeting is located in Bldg. 2793, Abrams Hall. **Once you have received confirmation of the course, you should contact Billeting and confirm your reservation with a credit card.**

If, when contacting the billeting office you are informed that on-post accommodations are not available, you will be asked to call 1-800 Go Army 1 (1-800-462-7691). Personnel at this number will assist you in locating accommodations at one of four contract hotels in the area.

If you encounter problems with your reservation, or have other questions about billeting, please contact the appropriate military company or detachment:

Army: 301-677-4065. Bldg. 8609
Air Force: 301-677-5689. Bldg. 6401
Navy/Coast Guard: 301-677-6283. Bldg. 8605
Marine Corps: 301-677-5109. Bldg. 8607

If you plan to bring family members you must coordinate this with billeting. Some rooms share a bathroom and billeting will not allow mixed genders to remain over night in these rooms. Pets are not allowed. Students whose orders authorize them to travel with their

families (e.g. student traveling TDY en route to a new duty station) should contact their respective military support detachment.

NOTE: This course is extremely demanding, and many off-duty hours will be devoted to homework. As childcare is scarce and expensive in this area, it would be better if children stayed with relatives while you are attending this course.

Late arrivals: Students arriving late risk losing their course reservation to a person on the class “stand-by” list. If you plan to arrive late for any reason, contact the DINFOS Registrar’s Office at 301-677-4648.

Pay concerns: Do everything in your power to ensure all your pay is properly arranged BEFORE you arrive. Except for the Navy, there is no finance center located on Fort Meade.

Exchange and Commissary privileges: Only military ID cardholders are authorized to use Post Exchange and Commissary facilities.

Class Information

You are to report to the Defense Information School, located at 6500 Mapes Road, and be in the classroom not later than 0755 the first day of class. All students are expected to check in at billeting not later than the day prior to class.

Parking: For those who have a vehicle, student parking is in the lot across from the school adjacent to the Shoppette. Once parked, cross the street (Zimborski Avenue). You will use the student entrance off Zimborski Avenue. Simply go through the doors, get a visitor’s badge from the front desk, and proceed up the stairs.

Orders: Bring several copies of your orders. The first day begins with a welcome by the commandant and course coordinator along with in processing and small group introductions.

Absence policy: You need to determine your priorities before arriving. The head of the Public Affairs Leadership Department has the authority to grant time off from class for important business and emergencies, but each request is reviewed individually. Absences for non-emergency, personal reasons **are not normally approved**. Clear your schedule now.

Graduation ceremony: Graduation is *slated* for 1330 the last day and it is a mandatory formation. If you are flying out, **DO NOT** schedule your return flight any earlier than 1700 that date.

Personal computers

Bring a laptop if you can. At a minimum, the laptop should be loaded with Microsoft Word, and if possible, PowerPoint.

Phone lines (local service only) are provided in billeting at no extra charge. All billeting rooms are equipped with high speed internet. If you cannot bring a laptop, students can use classroom computers until 2100 Monday through Friday. The school is closed on weekends and holidays. The school does have laptops which can be checked out to students.

Weigh-in for Army students

All **Regular Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve** students are required to meet the Army's body-fat standards as outlined in AR 600-9 before being allowed to enroll in the course. Because of this, all **Regular Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve** students must report to the DINFOS Army Student Company (Bldg. 8609) at 0500 **the first day of class**.

Students who do not meet Army standards will be enrolled, but will be reweighed in seven days and if still not within standards will receive a marginally achieved on their DA Form 1059.

Students must wear their Army PT uniform (shorts, t-shirt, white socks and sneakers) for the weigh-in. Bring any temporary or permanent physical profiles with you.

Reporting to your service detachment

All students (civilian and uniformed) must in-process at their service detachment. The first day has some time built into the schedule to accomplish this task. It is the responsibility of the student to accomplish this check in. Prepare to receive more information from your faculty on day one regarding service detachment in-processing. At minimum each detachment must collect a copy of your orders.

Dining facility

All students are allowed (and expected) to eat at the post dining facility. Therefore, per diem of \$10 per day (including weekends) to cover meal costs is all that is authorized by DFAS. Civilians should carry a copy of their orders when using the dining facility to avoid confusion with regard to authorization.

Rental cars

DINFOS funds a post shuttle that runs from billeting to the school and other post facilities. However, students are frequently billeted at hotels off post due to room non-availability. Therefore, rental cars are highly recommended.

Personal appearance

DINFOS military students are expected to maintain their personal appearance in accordance with applicable service regulations. As officers and senior enlisted personnel, you are role models for the junior enlisted students in both appearance and deportment. Civilians are expected to be in appropriate business attire. Most days will be business casual dress, but there will be some events for which a more professional appearance is appropriate.

Uniform and clothing requirements

All Services: Flight suits are not an authorized uniform at DINFOS

Army: ACUs for classroom and FTX. Class As for class photo and graduation.

Air Force: ABU/BDUs for classroom and FTX. Service Dress for class photo and graduation. ALL Air Force students at DINFOS MUST wear their blues (no tie/tab) on Mondays.

Navy: Service Khaki or NWU for classroom and FTX. Summer Whites for class photo and graduation. Navy students may wear the BDU or NWU during the FTX.

Marine Corps: Utilities for classroom and FTX. Service Alpha for class photo and graduation.

Civilian (DOD, all services):

Classroom –

Men: Business casual, slacks and shirt with collar.

Women: Business casual, dress or skirt/slacks with blouse

Class photo and graduation –

Men: Business attire, coat and tie

Women: Business attire, dress or skirt/ slacks with blouse (blazer optional)

Field Training Exercise –

Men and women: Outdoor casual attire (jeans/khakis, tennis shoes/sneakers).

NOTE: The OSX is a two-day field training exercise which takes place outdoors at the DINFOS field location. The OSX is conducted Wednesday and Thursday of the second week of training.